

Message Text

SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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S E C R E T BEIRUT 13321

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US, XF

SUBJECT: HUNGARIAN VIEWS ON SYRIA

1. IN CONVERSATION NOV 19 WITH HUNGARIAN AMBASSADOR TO SYRIA (VERES, WHO ALSO ACCREDITED LABANON), EMBOFF WAS TOLD CATEGORICALLY THAT SYRIAN GOVT WILL FOLLOW EGYPTIAN LEAD IN CURRENT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, AND THAT PRESENT COURSE IS DIRECTED TOWARD PEACE CONFERENCE. VERES SAID THAT SYRIAN OFFICIALS WILL LAG FEW STEPS BEHIND EGYPT, WILL MAKE TOUGHER STATEMENTS FOR PUBLIC AND INTERNAL POLITICAL CONSUMPTION, WILL BE TOUGHER BARGAINERS, AND MAY EXPRESS DISSATISFACTION WITH EGYPTIANS (AND USSR). NEVERTHELESS, SYRIANS WILL FOLLOW EGYPTIAN LEAD AND ARE ON VERY CLOSE TERMS WITH USSR.

2. WHILE VERES DID NOT SPECIFICALLY REFER TO PROBLEM OF SYRIAN DESIRE FOR PARTICIPATION OF EUROPEAN (AND AFRICAN) REPS IN PEACE TALKS (WHICH FIRST SURFACED DURING HAFEZ ASSAD'S NOV 11 MEETING WITH TWO FRENCH DEPUTIES), HE LEFT CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT EGYPT AND USSR CAN MOVE SARG OFF THIS POSITION SHOULD OTHER OBSTACLES TO PEACE TALKS BE REMOVED. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT SARG WORKING WITH EGYPT TO KEEP LID ON RADICALS DURING ALGIERS SUMMIT AND THAT TWO GOVTS ARE TRYING PREARRANGE BY SERIES BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS OUTCOME BOTH OF FONMIN MEETING AND ACTUAL SUMMIT.

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3. ON SUBJECT RELATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND UNITED STATES,

VERES SAID THAT TOP SARG OFFICIALS TAKING LINE WITH HIM THAT THEY PREPARED RECEIVED KISSINGER OR SISCO BUT ONLY IF SARG OBTAINED SOME CONCRETE CONCESSION FROM ISRAEL. SARG NOT WILLING TO RUN OF NEGATIVE REACTION FROM CERTAIN INTERNAL POLITICAL CIRCLES, IRAQ AND EVEN USSR FOR SORT OF ASSURANCE WHICH GIVEN TO SADAT. THEY SAY THEY MUST HAVE SOMETHING VISIBLE TO SHOW.

4. COMMENT: WE REPORT THIS IN IGNORANCE OF WHATEVER INFO DEPT HAS ON SYRIANS FROM OTHER SOURCES. VERES HAS BEEN IN DAMASCUS FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS AND HAS BEEN KNOWN TO EMBOFF AS RELIABLE SOURCE AT THREE DIFFERENT POSTS OVER PAST FIFTEEN YEARS.

BUFFUM

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